

TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH MSME ENTREPRENEURS IN THE GAMBIA

1. *Background*

There are synergies between UNCTAD's Empretec programme and the commitment of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) to elevating contributions of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Complementarities also exist between Empretec and the mandate of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) and the Gambia Import and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA) in terms of the promotion of entrepreneurship and MSMEs support in pursuit of sustainable development and inclusive growth. Empretec's core product is the Entrepreneurship Training Workshop (ETW), which aims to foster the motivation and self-confidence of participants who have chosen to start or expand their businesses. It is based on a behavioural approach, designed to unleash personal entrepreneurial potential. DESA provides intergovernmental support and collaborates with partners to develop innovative approaches, methodologies, models and analytical tools to address specific capacity gaps of countries and support implementation of the 2030 agenda of the SDGs. MOTIE is mandated to formulate and implement trade, investment and industrial policies that promote investment in the productive sector for increased production and export, thus promote trade as an engine of growth. MOTIE continues to formulate and implement as well as support policy measures that facilitate the creation of an efficient and effective environment for private sector-led development: promote the development of domestic trade, enhancing productive capacity development as well as ensure the creation of a sustained competitive business environment, particularly for MSMEs.

GIEPA is established by an Act of parliament to support the creation of a conducive business environment that promotes investment and export-led growth as well as support the development of sustainable local enterprises to build their capacity for employment creation, economic growth, and wealth generation. GIEPA recognizes the importance of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by supporting MSMEs to achieve the development objectives of Increase Productive Activities; Deepening Global Market Integration; Maximize Domestic Value Capture; Generate Productive Employment; Improve Quality of Employment; Promote Inclusive Production; Build Economic Resilience; Promote Self-sufficiency; Promote Resource Efficiency as well as Promote Eco-innovation. GIEPA is UNCTAD's Empretec national hosting institution and has a profound experience and capacity in delivering ETWs to promote entrepreneurship development among MSMEs in the Gambia as evident with projects like the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Youth Empowerment Project (YEP); International Organization for Migration (IOM), African Development Bank (AFDB), Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development Project (EPSDP) and other development initiatives. These interventions are crucial as more than eighty per cent of economic activities in the Gambia are conducted by MSMEs, and more than fifty per cent of the MSMEs are informal with virtually no entrepreneurial skills. To achieve the development objectives which are in line with the SDGs as stated above, promoting entrepreneurship skills is paramount.

There is an urgent need to spread the agenda for entrepreneurship promotion in The Gambia, focusing on strategy and capacity building for sector players. In this context, one sure and tested method in achieving such an objective is through the application of the UNCTAD-Empretec entrepreneurship training workshop (ETW), drawing participants from various relevant stakeholder institutions, organizations, university graduates, unemployed youths, women entrepreneurs, and other investors operating within the priority sectors of the Gambia. ETW's key beneficiaries will include women- and youth-owned/led MSMEs in trade, agri-business, horticulture, handicraft, poultry, fashion designing, vegetable production, skill entrepreneurship, innovation, and aquaculture.



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2. *Objective*

This workshop is organized under the partnership framework between DESA and MOTIE on elevating MSME contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in The Gambia. Through this framework, DESA will provide the main financial support to the workshop.

Specifically, the workshop aims to increase the number of MSME entrepreneurs, in particular women and youth, who will be able to contribute to SDGs/NDP 2018-2021 in The Gambia.

Specific objectives of the training

- To develop a positive attitude towards the development of sustainable enterprise, self-employment, and social entrepreneurship especially when facing uncertainties and economic shocks brought forth by external factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic
- Furthermore, raise the level of awareness of entrepreneurship and self-employment as a career option for women and young people.
- To provide need-based knowledge and practice about competencies and attitudes required for starting and operating a successful enterprise.
- Build an in-depth capacity in 30 MSMEs owners, located within the Greater Banjul Area (GBA) and CRR-North to enable them to become competitive, innovative and guide their enterprises successfully.

3. *Outcomes/Expected result*

- 40 trained entrepreneurs with high motivation and a better understanding of how they can enhance and improve their businesses resilience in the post-Covid-19 pandemic era, with a high potential of enhanced ability and to contribute to the SDGs and inclusive and sustainable growth in the Gambia.
- Better understanding by stakeholders on how the development of MSMEs through fostering entrepreneurship skills can help to attain their goals on economic and social development and on achieving the SDGs nationally.
- This ETW will lead to the following outcomes as the participants acquire and practice the entrepreneurial competences and behaviours: increase productivity; increase creation of new activities; increase exports, strengthened national value chains; increased domestic ownership; import substitution; increased labour demand; increased skilled workers; regional inclusion; social inclusion; product diversification; market diversification; increased domestic competition; resource efficiency; sustainable resource management and waste management.